[54] INFORMATION AND ADVERTISING DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM AND METHOD

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[57] ABSTRACT

In summary, the present invention is an information and advertising distribution system. A data server stores and updates a database of information items and advertisements. The information items and advertisements are each categorized so that each has an associated information category. Workstations remotely located from the data server each include a display device, a communication interface for receiving at least a subset of the information items and advertisements in the data server's database and local memory for storing the information items and advertisements received from the data server. An information administrator in each workstation establishes communication with the data server from time to time so as to update the information items and advertisements stored in local memory with at least a subset of the information items and advertisements stored by the data server. An information display controller in each workstation displays on the workstation's display device at least a subset of the information items and advertisements stored in local memory when the workstation meets predefined idleness criteria. At least a subset of the workstations include a profiler for storing subscriber profile data. The subscriber profile data represents subscriber information viewing preferences, indicating information categories for which the subscriber does and does not want to view information items. The information display controller includes a filter for excluding from the information items displayed on the display device those information items inconsistent with the subscriber profile data.

20 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets